

**ORDER OF THE CHIEF JUSTICE
OF THE SUPREME COURT OF NORTH CAROLINA**

On 30 May 2020, I issued [Emergency Directives 17–19](#) in response to the public health threat posed by the COVID-19 outbreak.

Each of those emergency directives addressed the more than 10,500 evictions pending in our state court system and coincided with Executive Order 142, in which Governor Roy Cooper prohibited landlords from taking any action in furtherance of a summary ejectment or an eviction of a residential or commercial tenant for reason of non-payment.

An additional emergency directive related to eviction proceedings is now necessary.

Accordingly, I hereby determine and declare under N.C.G.S. § 7A-39(b)(2) that catastrophic conditions resulting from the COVID-19 outbreak have existed and continue to exist in all counties of this state.

Emergency Directive 20

Notwithstanding the time limitation in N.C.G.S. § 42-28, when a plaintiff files a summary ejectment or small claim eviction complaint pursuant to Article 3 or Article 7 of Chapter 42 of the General Statutes and asks to be put in possession of the leased premises, the clerk of superior court shall issue a summons requiring the defendant to appear at a certain time and place not to exceed thirty (30) days from the issuance of the summons to answer the complaint.

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Additional emergency orders or directives under N.C.G.S. § 7A-39(b) may be entered as necessary to support the continuing operation of essential court functions.

Additional information about the Judicial Branch’s response to the COVID-19 outbreak is available at <https://www.nccourts.gov/covid-19>.

Issued this the 20th day of June, 2020.



Cheri Beasley
Chief Justice
Supreme Court of North Carolina